Russ Baker on the Effectiveness of the JFK Research Community (COPA 2011)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAXwL-xRpZU (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAXwL-xRpZU)

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[From Wikipedia] Russell Warren "Russ" Baker is an American author, publisher and investigative journalist. Baker is the Editor-in-Chief and Founder of the nonprofit news organization WhoWhatWhy. Baker has written for a variety of publications, including The New York Times Magazine, The New Yorker, The Washington Post, Esquire, Vanity Fair, and The Village Voice.

Baker is the author of the 2008 book Family of Secrets, which raises "uncomfortable questions" about members of the Bush Family and their careers and relationships outside of politics, and presents evidence of connections between President George H.W. Bush and individuals involved with the Watergate scandal and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

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mommy okay and this this this a bluetooth that I'm using is this what I'm going to talk on or talk into the computer okay so I'll just continue you tell me when you're ready testing three two okay well hello everyone I'm sorry that I couldn't be there in person would like to be support supportive in any way that I can my talk today is about how the JFK research community can improve its effectiveness some of you may think well where does he get the temerity to talk about that I have spoken to one of your conference it's live in one remote and I am very interested in the work that you do I am essentially an outsider as many of you know I'm an investigative journalist by profession and I came to the pol Kennedy research area fairly recently as a result of the work that I did on my book family of secrets I was researching the Bush family I was not researching the Kennedy assassination but essentially I became interested in some facts of George HW Bush's life that led me into this area beginning basically with his claim that

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beginning basically with his claim that he could not remember where he was 22 1963 and as a result simultaneous with my doing research on the candidate on the Bush family I began doing research on the Kennedy assassination in my book family of Secrets has about four or five chapters largely new material relating to the assassination particularly as connects with George HW Bush and his milieu in any case since I've completed the book by the way I went in and I think this is very very important that I went in with an open mind I pride myself on doing my work without an agenda I think that if you go into any kind of research with a very very fixed idea of what you will find or what you want to find the results that are invariably going to be tainted and I really was just collecting a lot of facts and trying to connect the dots if you will in any case several years now since family the secrets came out I'm glad to say that the large majority of what I have in born out we haven't had any kind of significant Corrections there were several very very small ere is mostly a

couple of things where we said that someone had gone to one University where he actually go but in terms of the core of the material typically the Kennedy material it stood up quite well but now I've had a chance to kind of look a little bit at what response there was to this work from the JFK researcher community and I have to say I was quite disappointed because our sense was that family of secrets contain a great deal of new and important information I had thought that there would be a widespread interest in it and that folks would communicate with each other would talk about it would build on it and would try to link it to other work being done out there I think it's

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work being done out there I think it's very very important to work in a collaborative way to share information to discuss information that to try to build some kind of a coherent and meaningful whole and I think my own experience it's seeing that not happen with this body of work indicates to me it explains to me a little bit about why it is that even at this late date the public still is so fragmented so confused has trouble understanding even the basics of what has already been established and so I'd really like to talk a little bit about over the course of the next 20 minutes or so she would leave some time for questions if I can figure this technology out and how I'm supposed to get the question first of all I am looking a few notes yes her eyes are moving around that's why I I see three or four deficiencies if you will in the way that people work together or don't work together in this community and I would say one of them is essentially a kind of a solo approach by researchers now understandably ego certainly comes into many many pictures and it comes in here too but I see not a great deal of effort to researchers to work with each other and I've experienced this firsthand because I've reached out to quite a few people along the way and even since the book has come out some have been very very interested in talking and sharing particularly a Peter Dale Scott within quite good friends Peter and I actually did a joint event not too long ago two books ago in San Francisco and I'm very very pleased with the way that we share materials send things up and back or for people and so forth I'd like to encourage much more of that the second thing is a kind of a constant criticism of others and I think you all know what I'm talking about I get emails all the time instead of sort of praising all the

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time instead of sort of praising all the new material I brought out kind of saying well this thing is technically wrong and why did you do that and so on like I don't think that that's that helpful I think that's helpful as part of a larger effort to cooperate with people however the third thing is that I see a lot of people take what I would call it kind of a hobbyist approach to there's a very narrow approach almost like somebody who collects a particular kind of car it was only interested in that that people seem to be very very interested in say ballistics or what happened in Mexico City or what happened in New Orleans or as to Oswald's theory and so forth and focus almost exclusively on that now I understand why you would do that from a research standpoint but ultimately if our directive is to try to advance public understanding of American history and of this absolutely seminal event we've got to be able to not only focus on specific things but to build links between our work and that of others and at the conclusion of my remarks I'll suggest a few ways that we could do that in particularly ways I'd love to have people interactive with me and the work that I do and then I sometimes I almost get a sense that people who have been deeply involved with the issue for so long almost don't even really want it solved they just kind of enjoy doing it and of course that's not where I'm coming from I would like to see this thing solved so so that I think is very very important now what to do about that first of all it seems to me that it would be important to establish as many points of commonality as possible things that we can't agree on instead of the current either intentional or accidental chaos that I think prevails there are a lot of talented people around but well-meaning and smart we don't necessarily all play well with others

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others or an effort and I have again begun recently reaching out to a few people and asking them if they would like to work with me on developing things linking things figuring things out and it seems to me that if we could set on it is work on a few sets of facts and kind of figure out what it is that we we can agree on

those and perhaps even find a way to publish them communally that would be very very important particularly as we're coming up on the 50th anniversary I am seeing patterns everywhere when I wrote family of Secrets I was fairly cautious in drawing conclusions and I would just invite the reader to figure out what they thought things might mean since then I have increasingly come to the realization that it's almost impossible statistically and logically to dismiss this enormous body of facts that we have and to accept them as coincidence and I think that those who do at this point really we have to take a hard look at them just a few things that I focused on in family of secrets that I've gotten some more information on or that I think clearly are solid ground and worth developing as you may know if you read the book I was very interested in the relationship between Georgia HW Bush and a whole bunch of figures who were in Dallas on November 22 or were in that general orbit all of those connections I would encourage people to look at again they seem to be quite significant one figure that I looked at extensively fellow named Jack Creighton and CRI chto n who was the head of a military intelligence unit in Dallas operating from an underground communications bunker in Dallas that day that struck me is something that people would pick up on him quite surprised that other than Peter I really haven't

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that other than Peter I really haven't seen anybody run with that George de Mohrenschildt I was not the first person to look at him many we'll have some very extensively but I think I created a new set of connections and some new coherence to him and his relationships with both George HW Bush and with Lee Harvey Oswald and I think that the de Mohrenschildt mature I know several people are looking at books about him but I'm afraid that these may not in the direction of creating greater clarity of what so I think creighton think de Mohrenschildt are very important I think the Texas School Book Depository itself is very important and again if you've read family of Secrets you know that I started from scratch with a lot of things I just wanted to know for example what is what was the Texas School Book Depository and one of the revelations for me and perhaps for a lot of you who did read family secrets was that this building was really not in the Texas School Book Depository it was a building with another name into which a company called the Texas School Book Depository company moved in a kind of a skeleton staff not that long prior to the assassination and I was deeply intrigued by that because it became very clear to me that that company had no legitimate business reason to move into that building his own military intelligence connections and that in fact even in the fall of any year and particularly 1963 they really were not in a growth mode that usually were seasonally laid off the vast majority of their employees oh really was no reason for them to have hired Lee Harvey Oswald in my determination except that basically they were told to do that for reasons other than business I even had an opportunity to look at you know the common story is

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to look at you know the common story is oh I forgot his job because he was referred by someone else who was working there well that that someone else it turns out only have got his job there a very short time before Oswald and in fact had moved down specifically to take this very unexceptional and low ranking job and so that seemed to me based on my couple of decades of covering covert operations to be a classic cover operation in other words they needed to put Oswald in the build and they needed a kind of indirect route and so first they would need to get this other guy who was connected to Mrs Payne who had her own intelligence connections and then once once that fellow was in even brought Oswald in this very effectively to this day has prevented much of the community from looking at really why Oslo was there and I as I say I think this is one of the most important smoking guns that needs to be developed obviously also the approve the owner of the building was and the fact that he conveniently was out of the country at the time of the shooting was never interviewed by the Warren Commission I also found very important links between George de Mohrenschildt not only as an old friend of George HW s he was as I reveal and family secrets working for the CIA in the early 1960s undercover with his royal company but that George de Mohrenschildt was connected to Oswald Gorky warship also knew all these other people another very important fact I revealed family of Secrets was that in the fall of 1962 as Oswald was being handled and passed along within this Russian

expatriate community he was linked up with George de Mohrenschildt who then promptly created a new charity and the people on his charity board are all potential suspects one of them was the wife of D Harold Byrd the man who owned the building from which Oswald would

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the building from which Oswald would purportedly fire the shots and so you can see something significant coming together there and again I'm just quite astonished at several years later if I go on the various websites which admittedly I don't do that often but I do go on occasionally where many of you participate in discussions and chats I see extremely little on this day people are very eager to just that someone will post some of this material and someone else will just see an opportunity to snipe at someone or make a joke and they move right on I'm just sort of incredulous that this material is not being built upon so there are quite a few things especially between the the abundance of intelligence and military industrial complex connected figures mapping out their exact relationships with each other and where they were at key moments another thing I dealt with in family of secrets are these two memos related to George HW Bush Dallas 1963 1 this memo probably all of you know about Hoover memo referring to a briefing related to Cuban exiles and the assassination of that memo which has been around for a long time I'm surprised nobody has done more with that and it has occurred to me actually since the publication of family of secrets that the very fact that Hoover wrote this kind of almost a nonsensical memo it is the memo itself doesn't make a lot of sense because it basically says the State Department in the wake of the assassination has asked us in the FBI to check with the Cuban exile community and see if any of them might be planning to hatch an invasion of Cuba with the assassination it was an excuse well that's kind of pretty improbable they wouldn't be doing anything without coordination with the American intelligence community so I took that memo itself to be some kind of Hoover in this sort of internecine warfare between the different agencies

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warfare between the different agencies all of which appear to have had some kind of culpability or links to Oswald and so the mere fact that Hoover put this memo into government records and then he named George Bush of the CIA specifically as somebody getting a briefing I think that Hoover somehow was it was with flagging Bush's awareness or or involvement in something related to the assassination I think we need to do much much more with that I wrote about a Pepsi about a rather soft drink bottle errs convention in Dallas and there's a wonderful photo in family of secrets in our photo gallery there where you could actually see Kennedy's car going down the street and a motorcade and there are traffic passing by it in the opposite lane which is astonishing obviously a violation of all the protocols of security and that's very interesting but all also interesting is that this public bus where I assume anybody on the bus could have shot Kennedy right out of the window there had a big advertising poster on the side welcoming to Dallas the these bottlers who mostly were very right-wing but you were quite angry at Castro over sugar prices and eager to overthrow him and there was something like I think it was 8,000 of these strangers were in doubt now the failure of the JFK assassination community to find that interesting that that and you look through these books that have been around forever about the Kennedy assassination there's nothing practically other than maybe a very brief mention about this this convention but I mean the fact that they were timed at the same time is very very significant it because it basically would have made it impossible to really assess huge numbers of strangers coming in and out of Dallas and I think the bottlers issue needs to be studied also Donald Kendall who was the head of Pepsi and again in family of secrets I go into Richard Nixon's embarrassed presence in Dallas that morning that he I think

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Dallas that morning that he I think correctly was mortified to find that he had been invited would be there when his former chief rival was gunned down I don't think Nixon was complicit in it but I think he was deliberately brought to Dallas partially as a way of showing him that when he was president he might remember what happened to the presidents who strayed too far from that kind of military industrial

consensus that I think is extremely important and people ought to do more research on hello okay am i back live again okay so it did I was talking about the bottlers Association and the okay if you could all hear me I'll just continue then and what I was saying was you know and so I think that the whole fact that the bottle is conventional was scheduled for Dallas in that week is itself quite possibly something to look at in terms of the are you there can you hear me Costigan hello okay do we have another ad again okay so what I'm saying was that the the bottlers convention which interested me enormous ly hello hello

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hello okay so everyone could hear me now see me okay all right so so as regards the bottlers I was very interested in that and what I've got in family of secrets I think is mostly new and I would encourage people to look at that because I think the fact that Kennedy ended up coming to dowse at the same time that there was this conference with these thousands of strangers the fact that the president of Pepsi Donald Kendall managed to recruit Richard Nixon to his board and persuade Nixon to come to Dallas that very week to encourage Nixon to call a press conference to criticize Kennedy I think all of these things need to be looked at Kendall's own interest in American intervention abroad against leaders like Ally and a like in the role of large American companies traditionally I'm hearing noise it can you hear me okay okay III think there's a great deal of very productive material there to be examined more carefully since we don't have a lot of time left I'm going to go on but I do think that's very important another related thing is the fact that George HW Bush and Jack Creighton who I mentioned military one big military intelligence the other being being non-military intelligence I think

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being non-military intelligence I think the fact that they were the Republican candidates for governor and Senator that year is not insignificant the fact that they knew each other well the fact that the man who was the chairman of the been very small Texas Republican Party who supposedly persuaded the two of them to run for office and then as I reveal in family of secrets the fact that the Family Foundation of that man was itself later identified and not challenged as a CIA funding conduit how can we ignore these things I mean I think you're looking at there some potential kind of funding for the operation itself again that's another thing that just has been generally ignored in the research community another thing which is not in family of secrets but has come out recently and I think this is quite important is the the recording as as many of you may know LBJ also had a recording system in the White House and this is a phone call from the columnist Joseph Alsop pressuring LBJ to convene the Warren Commission and LBJ is resisting and he wants a Texas based investigation but I think that's very very important and in the end LBJ basically does what all stop essentially tells him to do I'll stop famously close with all of these key figures in the intelligence community I don't think that's a coincidence I think that was his job to tell Johnson to do this and what that means I'm not sure exactly it makes you wonder how much Johnson did know exactly about what was going on or whether he just was understanding things intuitively and from a bit of a distance Joe Alsop very important figure also was very close to John F Kennedy and was the person who provided a place where Kennedy could come and have some of his trysts there are a number of these figures who Ben Bradley and so forth who

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figures who Ben Bradley and so forth who were friends of Kennedy but also friends are the very people in the intelligence community who were deeply alarmed by what Kennedy was doing and who wanted him out people who Kennedy had fired as a result of the Bay of Pigs fiasco so I think all of those connections need to be looked at in in closing and moving toward some questions if you would you have questions I think we need to look at the willful failures of the media to cover any of these kinds of revelations as you know major institutions like the New York Times and CBS and have you what have you basically just don't cover anything about the assassination except for sort of gossipy little things about Jackie that don't get us anywhere if you go to our web site as you may know I run a non-profit investigative news site called who what why those three words who what why.com and on the site if you go up to the carousel that lives at the

top click on a story we have about the New York Times is ostrich act on the JFK assassination and the way that they continue to ignore revelations even when they covered I know Jeff Morley spoke to your conference even when they reported on some legal breakthroughs in trying to obtain information relating to Mexico City right in the lead of the article clearly some editor forced in some comment that kind of watered down the impact of what the reporter was trying to say I think we need to look very very hard at the media itself in part of course because of operation Mockingbird and the intention of that circle to control the media itself which I think it's still going on either overtly or in a much more sub rosa kind of way in the less official sort of way but I think we still see many many individuals in the

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still see many many individuals in the media whose job it is or at least whose proclivity it is to just block all serious discussion of these matters and this gets to what I was talking about at the beginning how crucial it is to figure out why this incredible information that you all dig up then you all read about is not known to the great mass of the public here's another thing I see that the sixth floor museum is having some events and you know my question was what the heck is the sixth floor museum who's behind that what is their agenda and I can tell you that when I approached them and clearly I've got some interesting things to say about the assassination they sort of cleared their throat and had some technical excuse of why they couldn't have me why they couldn't feature family of secrets at the muse I think the sixth floor museum itself is part of the cover-up and I think that if you see that it was funded private privately by the Dallas City fathers the very people who didn't like Jack Kennedy and were connected to a mayor Coble and his brother fired by JFK and so on I think that we need to look at the obstruction airy institutions themselves and try to really let the public understand what's going on perhaps maybe the the museum will see this and suddenly see that that maybe they're going to have to fess up work or start seriously dealing with this material be interesting to observe that so anyway moving forward I would like among other things to offer our website who what why.com as a kind of a serious rallying point for those who do play well with others for those who do want to see some real progress in solving this thing I personally am very interested in hearing from those who may have information or a little collaborate speaking as an author and an investigative journalist I'm always interested in the help of those who are

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interested in the help of those who are good at research I'm happy to work closely with you to guide you wherever I can in technical aspects of investigative reporting and sometimes researchers don't they're very good at certain aspects of research but they don't have some of the essential investigative reporter toolkit and I'm happy to provide that well so in any case whether it's with me or it's with other people I'd love to see authors cooperate with each other share this information and try to map out some kind of a coherent final narrative of what we do know and how we think these events went down both on November 22 and in the period leading up to it and also in the cover-up that has continued ever since so those are really my remarks thank you very much if you've got any questions I'd be happy to answer yeah yes well I mean IIIi told this story before obviously he did an enormous amount of work I bought his CD and I reached out to him I actually traveled all the way to see him in his town and I don't really want to get into casting aspersions on people but that is not one easy individual to work with he has a tremendous mass of documents and things but unfortunately and I may be the only person who actually tried to read through the whole thousands of pages of it it's very very difficult to find the needles in that haystack he's not a journalist and he doesn't seem to understand what's significant and what isn't I did reach

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significant and what isn't I did reach out to him in fact he's mentioned in in the book and the work that he did but the reality was that he from personal reasons doesn't trust people didn't trust me and basically wasn't even willing to shake my hand because he suspected didn't I don't really want to go there but I mean they're very strange things and I can't be responsible for other people I I'd love to talk to him as I say I made that the

extensive effort to do so and he's not the only one there are others who would say things like you know I've spent my whole life on this I don't want to share it I'm sick of this I'm not really doing anything more there are a whole plethora of reasons that people don't cooperate with others yes hi yeah hi Paul [Music]

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you know what I mean I had heard that and I'm sorry to say that maybe with just so many different things on my plate I I remember starting to look at that and trying to figure out the the credibility of that and I don't recall that I had the opportunity to get all the way through on that but I would encourage you and anybody else who has any of these things to please contact me there are email contacts on the who what why website they're also on the there's also a family of secrets calm website you can contact me by that a please feel free at any time to point out passages and books a new breakthroughs whatever I will look at them I will get back to you now all of these things are important and they all need to be checked out now kicking I'm sorry can you restate that you know there are indications that he is you know getting on in years showing signs of that I think that the Bush family cannot be written off at all with with the Republican Party putting up such a gallery of clowns as they have this year figures like Jeb Bush end up

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this year figures like Jeb Bush end up having a great deal of appeal and III think they are preparing to run Jeb certainly in 2016 and frankly I wouldn't rule out the possibility that he would get a draft in 2012 so I think they're very much in the picture and and uh you know poppy to me was the most important of them but he's not the only one okay thank you they they wanted to know what's that like really really large Mouse that's walking by and can feel the creaking floorboards hello haha pick up that joke okay so alright I was just telling somebody who just walked by and Beatriz okay have a good day all of you okay

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END